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RELEASED IN PART
B1, 1.4(B), 1.4(D)PAGE 01 BOGOTA 02208 01 OF 02 131707Z
ACTION ARA-01

INFO	LOG-00	ACDA-15	AMAD-01	CIAE-00	C-01	DODE-00	HA-09
	H-01	INM-01	INRE-00	INR-01	L-03	ADS-00	NSAE-00
	NSCE-00	OMB-01	PA-01	PM-01	PRS-01	P-01	SNP-01
	SP-01	SS-01	TRSE-00	T-01	USIE-00	/042W	
					-----0EE471 131903Z /38		

R 131704Z FEB 92
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2620
INFO AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
AMEMBASSY QUITO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BOGOTA 02208

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, CO, US, VE
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FEBRUARY 7TH BREAKFAST MEETING
WITH [REDACTED]

1. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

2. DURING A FEB. 7 BREAKFAST WITH THE AMBASSADOR AND
POLCOUNS, [REDACTED]

B1

OFFERED A FRANK AND PESSIMISTIC COMMENTARY ON RECENT
EVENTS IN VENEZUELA. [REDACTED] CONVINCED THAT CAP'S
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TROUBLES ARE FAR FROM OVER. HE HAS NEARLY TWO YEARS
REMAINING IN OFFICE, AND ALTHOUGH [REDACTED] NOT
SUGGEST THAT ANOTHER COUP ATTEMPT MIGHT BE IMMINENT,
[REDACTED] CAP NEEDED TO MOVE DECISIVELY TO GET DOMESTIC
AFFAIRS, ESPECIALLY THE ECONOMY, UNDER CONTROL. [REDACTED]
CALLED CAP A "MAN FROM ANOTHER ERA" AND CRITICIZED HIS
LACK OF TRUE POLITICAL SKILLS. VENEZUELAN'S WERE VERY
UNHAPPY WITH CURRENT ECONOMIC CONDITIONS, AND
DEMOCRACY IN LATIN AMERICA WAS NOT NEARLY SO IMBEDDED
AS ALL OF US WOULD LIKE TO BELIEVE, [REDACTED]
ADDED THAT "DEMOCRACY IN OUR REGION IS STILL VERY

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: NORMAN M BOUTON
CLASSIFICATION: CONFIDENTIAL REASON: 1.4(B), 1.4(D)
DECLASSIFY AFTER: 12 FEB 2017
DATE/CASE ID: 28 JUL 2008 200503656

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FRAGILE."

3. CAP, [REDACTED] IS A MAN WHOSE TIME HAS COME AND GONE; HE WAS A GOOD POLITICIAN WHO IS NOT THE RIGHT MAN TO BE RUNNING VENEZUELA TODAY. CAP HAS A GOOD ECONOMIC TEAM, [REDACTED] BUT UNLIKE GAVIRIA WHO HAS AN EXCELLENT GRASP OF THE SUBSTANCE OF ECONOMICS, CAP DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ANYTHING HIS ADVISORS TELL HIM. THIS COULD PROBABLY BE OVERCOME IF HE HAD A GOOD POLITICAL TEAM, BUT HE HAS PURPOSELY NOT SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH STRONG POLITICAL FIGURES. THERE ARE SEVERAL IN GAVIRIA'S CABINET WHO THEMSELVES ASPIRE TO THE PRESIDENCY. THEREFORE, [REDACTED] THEY ARE DRIVEN BY THEIR OWN AMBITIONS TO DO A GOOD JOB, FOR GAVIRIA'S SUCCESSES WILL REFLECT WELL ON THEM. CAP, HOWEVER, HAS NO FUTURE PRESIDENTS ON HIS TEAM, AND THE PERFORMANCE OF HIS TEAM IS LACKLUSTER.

B1

4. [REDACTED] CAP'S POLITICAL TEAM HAD DONE AN EXTRAORDINARILY POOR JOB OF SELLING ECONOMIC REFORMS
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TO THE PUBLIC. GAVIRIA AND MEXICO'S SALINAS, ON THE OTHER HAND, HAD DONE SUPERB JOBS OF GETTING CONTROL OF THEIR SITUATIONS AND MANIPULATING WHAT IS PUBLISHED ABOUT THEM AND THEIR PROGRAMS IN THE MEDIA. CAP, [REDACTED] SAID, HAS NO CONTROL WHATSOEVER OVER WHAT IS PUBLISHED IN VENEZUELA. (NOTE: THIS CONVERSATION PRECEDED CAP'S MOVES TO CENSOR NEWS STORIES.) [REDACTED] THE CONSTANT BARRAGE OF CRITICISM OF CAP AND HIS PROGRAMS ONLY SERVED TO MAKE A DIFFICULT SITUATION WORSE.

5. [REDACTED] CRITICIZED CAP FOR HAVING TWO WOMEN IN HIS LIFE. HIS WIFE, [REDACTED] WAS A GOOD AND PROUD WOMAN, POPULAR IN HER OWN RIGHT. AND WHILE CAP'S MISTRESS WAS A VERY NICE PERSON, AND EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIRS WERE NOT UNCOMMON IN THE LATIN CULTURE, THAT CAP WAS OFTEN SEEN IN PUBLIC WITH HIS MISTRESS IRRITATED MANY AND WAS ANOTHER FACTOR UNDERCUTTING HIS IMAGE. THIS "MACHO" TENDENCY WAS ANOTHER INDICATION THAT CAP WAS LIVING IN THE PAST.

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6. [REDACTED] SUGGESTED THAT IF CAP IS TO AVOID POTENTIALLY DISASTROUS PROBLEMS, HE IS GOING TO HAVE TO CHANGE HIS WAYS. THE COLOMBIAN PRESS HAD THAT DAY

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CARRIED REMARKS BY CAP THAT HE WOULD NOT CHANGE HIS ECONOMIC POLICIES. SOMEONE NEEDED TO PERSUADE CAP TO BE MORE TEMPERATE IN HIS PUBLIC REMARKS AND TO BE POLITICALLY SMART IF HE WAS TO MAKE PLANNED ECONOMIC REFORMS MORE PALATABLE TO THE PUBLIC. [REDACTED] SUGGESTED THAT SOMEONE SHOULD BE THE USG. IN SPITE OF GAVIRIA'S TREMENDOUS PROGRESS IN IMPROVING VENEZUELAN/COLOMBIAN

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RELATIONS, TRADITIONAL AND DEEPLY IMBEDDED SUSPICIONS OF ONE ANOTHER REMAINED. IF GAVIRIA OR COLOMBIA TRIED TO GIVE CAP ADVICE, CAP'S AND THE VENEZUELAN'S NATURAL SUSPICIONS OF THE COLOMBIANS WOULD MAKE THEM REJECT THE ADVICE. [REDACTED] THE USG SHOULD RECOGNIZE CAP'S SHORTCOMINGS AND WORK WITH HIM TO AVOID FURTHER PROBLEMS. MORE INSTABILITY NEXT DOOR WAS CERTAINLY SOMETHING COLOMBIA WANTED TO AVOID.

7. COMMENT: [REDACTED] CLEARLY VERY WORRIED BY EVENTS IN VENEZUELA [REDACTED] THAT IF THINGS TAKE A TURN FOR THE WORSE THERE, IT WILL BE A DISASTER FOR

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BOGOTA 02208

E.O. 12356: DECL:OADR
TAGS: PREL, CO, US, VE
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S FEBRUARY 7TH BREAKFAST MEETING
VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA AND A POTENTIAL DISASTER FOR
THE REST OF THE REGION. THE COUP IN HAITI AND THE
ATTEMPT IN VENEZUELA ARE SEEN AS AN INDICATOR
THAT DEMOCRACY'S ROOTS ARE NOT SUFFICIENTLY DEEP
ANYWHERE IN THE REGION TO SERVE AS A GUARANTEE AGAINST
A MILITARY TAKEOVER. BUSBY

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